[Namowei-tedi Group]

Kreibŏwei population was in need of an ally to aid them in their raids against Patanowĕ-tedi. Shortly after they moved to Kreibŏwei they made friendly contact with a Shamatari village, then under the leadership of Riakowĕ, located on the Mavaca River. The Kreibŏwei-tedi began visiting Riakowĕ's village and entered into feasting relationships with his followers.

Riakowĕ's followers were related to the Shamatari with whom the Kreibŏwei-tedi were at war: Sibarariwĕ's village. Sibarariwĕ persuaded Riakowĕ to invite the Kreibŏwei-tedi to a feast during which the two Shamatari groups planned to kill as many men as they could and abduct women. By doing this Sibarariwĕ would avenge the murder of his older brother, Ruwahiwĕ, who was treacherously killed about 10 years earlier by the Kreibŏwei-tedi, when the latter lived at Patanowĕ-tĕka.

The Kreibŏwei-tedi accepted the feast invitation and went to Riakowĕ's village in the dry season (i.e., December through March) of 1950-51. Sibarariwĕ's followers, along with a party of men from Hasabŏwĕ-tedi, were concealed in the jungle outside Riakowĕ's village. Shortly after arriving at the village, the Kreibŏwei-tedi men were attacked by Riakowĕ's men with sharpened staves and axes, and eleven of them were killed. Those that managed to break out of the palisades were shot from ambush by Sibarariwĕ's followers, along with the Hasabŏwĕ-tedi, resulting in the wounding of a large number of Kreibŏwei-tedi men. Only six or seven women were seized by the Shamatari; but, the greediness of the Shamatari

over the loss of the five women, and Yąnomamö canons of ferocity dictated that this loss would have to be avenged. The Monou-tedi informed the Patanowä-tedi that they were going to shoot them on sight the next time they met.

After the Patanowä-tedi returned to Bisaasi-tedi they packed their possessions and left for home. The feast was cancelled, as the Patanowä-tedi feared being ambushed by a Monou-tedi raiding party if they remained at Bisaasi-tedi. Before departing, the Patanowä-tedi assured their hosts that they still wanted peace with them, no matter what the Monou-tedi eventually did.

This illustrates dramatically the Yąnomamö political philosophy that it is legitimate to take advantage of a weak village. The Monou-tedi, knowing that the Patanowä-tedi were politically in need of allies, took advantage of this situation when they abducted the women. They also knew that the Bisaasi-tedi would not take Patanowä-tedi's side in the dispute that was bound to follow, as too many of the Bisaasi-tedi had personal grudges against the Patanowä-tedi. The Monou-tedi also knew that the Patanowä-tedi were not likely to begin a war over this incident, as they already had more enemies than they could successfully withstand without allies. In short, the Monou-tedi knew that they stood a good chance of gaining women by abducting them from the Patanowä-tedi without great risk of being shot by the latter. As the conclusion shows, they managed to obtain two women and did not get into a shooting war with the Patanowä-tedi. However, their anger at

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so frequent that the group elects to fission rather than attempt to keep an uneasy internal peace. Although a larger village has an advantage in terms of its capacity to raid other groups and is better able to defend itself from raids, the internal fights often lead to killings within the group. Then, there is no alternative but for one of the factions to leave. Its members may anticipate a situation like this and begin making a new garden long before the fighting becomes violent enough to lead to deaths, or a fight can develop unexpectedly and result immediately in bloodshed. The guilty faction must then seek refuge in the village of an ally until it can establish its own garden. Usually, however, the larger group fissions while its members are on relatively peaceable terms, and the two resulting villages remain in the same general area so that they can reunite when raids threaten them. This is the situation that prevails between Upper and Lower Bisaasi-teri and Monou-teri; all three have a common history as a single village, but the members of each live in separate villages because of the numerous fights that took place within the group while they were still a single village. They continue, however, to rely on each other for protection when raids threaten. The Monou-teri (see Fig. 2–8), in fact, spent about a third of their time in either Lower Bisaasi-teri or in Kąobawä's group while I conducted my fieldwork. They were being raided by the Patanowä-teri and had not completed the new garden they were making. The Patanowä-teri forced them to abandon their producing site and move west.

The Patanowä-teri themselves were forced to establish a new garden because of the incessant raids by a number of villages. In addition to keeping always on the move between their two gardens, they also sought periodic refuge in the village of one of their own allies, a village two days travel to the south of their primary garden.

The raids against the Patanowä-teri by about a dozen villages illustrate a cardinal strategy of Yąnomamö warfare: attack a group when it is beleaguered and weakened by other enemies. When I first arrived, the Patanowä-teri were fighting only three groups. The Monou-teri then entered into the conflict by abducting a number of women from them, an act that ultimately led to raiding and killing. When the Monou-teri entered the conflict, they also persuaded their own allies to participate, bringing four other villages into the war. These, in turn, were joined by some of their allies so that the total number of belligerent villages rapidly grew to about a dozen. Many of them joined the hostilities because they knew that the Patanowä-teri could not defend themselves against a host of enemies. The new belligerents, therefore, stood a good chance of abducting women while being relatively immune to punitive raids. They could also discharge obligations to their allies by supporting their raids against the Patanowä-teri without exposing themselves to great danger.

In Fig. 2–8 the movements of Kąobawä's village over the past seventy-five years is summarized. The village originated at the site of Konata, occupied prior to 1900 by Kąobawä's grandfather. This site was abandoned because several villages (not indicated on the map) began raiding the people with such frequency that they were forced to flee south, cross the Orinoco River, and take refuge with allies at a place called Wareta. Similarly, Wareta was abandoned because of new wars, so the group again crossed the Orinoco River and settled at Namowei. Here, their old enemies again drove them out of the area, so the group migrated to Hąhoyaoba. Kąobawä was born at this location, some forty years ago. This site was abandoned because the soil in that area was very poor; even to this day, there are no Yąnomamö villages located in that general area.

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One of Damowä's brothers—who also participated in this raid—was married to one of the victim's daughters.

The Monou-teri had anticipated their raid by clearing a new garden site across the Mavaca River, where they hoped to take refuge after the inevitable revenge raids from Patanowä-teri began. They had hoped to complete their garden before the raids became intense, as the Mavaca River would have provided a natural obstacle to raiders. The Patanowä-teri, however, were infuriated by this killing and raided the Monou-teri immediately. Two of the raiders were Damowä's "brothers."

The raiders caught Damowä outside the new garden searching for honey. This was in the first week of February. He had two of his wives with him and one child. He was looking up a tree when the raiders shot a volley of arrows into his body, at least five of which struck him in the abdomen. He managed to nock one of his own arrows and shoot at the raiders, although he was probably mortally wounded at the time. Then Bishewä, one of the raiders, shot a final arrow at Damowä, piercing his neck below his ear. He fell to the ground and died after being struck by this arrow.

The raiders did not attempt to abduct the women, as they were close to the Monou-teri campsite and they had to cross the Mavaca River to escape. The women ran back to the village to tell the others what happened. Instead of giving chase, as they ought to have done—according to Kąobawä and the others in Bisaasi-teri—the Monou-teri themselves fled into the jungle and hid until darkness, afraid that the raiders might return.

The man who fired the fatal arrow into Damowä's neck was a son of the man the Monou-teri shot in their raid. Two of the men who shot Damowä were his classificatory brothers (members of the same lineage), three were brothers-in-law (including the man who shot the fatal arrow), and one was a man who had been adopted into the Patanowä-teri village as a child, after he and his mother were abducted from a distant Shamatari village.

The Monou-teri burned the corpse of Damowä the next day. They held a mortuary ceremony that week and invited their allies, members of the two Shamatari villages and the two groups of Bisaasi-teri, to participate. Gourds of the dead man's ashes were given to specific men in several of the allied villages, an act calculated to reaffirm solidarity and friendship. Damowä's widows were given to his two eldest surviving brothers.

Kąobawä, a classificatory brother to Damowä, assumed the responsibility of organizing a revenge raid. Damowä's own brothers failed to step forward to assume this responsibility, and for a while there was no leadership whatsoever in Monou-teri. Finally, Orusiwä, the oldest and most competent member of the *Hor* lineage, emerged as the *de facto* village leader, a position he acquired largely by default. He was related to the slain headman as brother-in-law, and their respective descent groups dominated village politics.[2] Hence, leadership in Monou-teri shifted from the *Sha* lineage to the *Hor* lineage.

Kąobawä delayed the revenge raid until April, giving the Monou-teri time to expand their new garden. This date also coincided with the beginning of the rains, thus reducing the possibility of a retaliation until the next dry season and providing the Monou-teri even more time to expand their new garden and abandon the old one.

The Monou-teri were afraid to return to their producing garden, so they divided their time between their newly cleared site, where they worked at cutting timber and

[2]See Table 3-1 and Fig. 3-5 of Chapter 3 for the lineage composition of Monou-teri.